8. Irrigation. The expenditure on minor irrigation works has risen from Rs. 31,412 in 1096 to Rs. 94,691 in 1099, the allotment for the current year being Rs. 1,19,990. The restoration of eight tanks in the Neyyattinkara taluk and five in the Vilavankod taluk was all but completed by the close of 1099, and good progress was made in the improvement of some more tanks in Vilavankod and Kalkulam. The report of the Irrigation Committee appointed in 1098 for examining the condition of the minor irrigation works in the Trivandrum taluk and for formulating proposals in respect of its improvement has just been received by the Government and is now under their scrutiny.

9. Land Records Maintenance. In my first Assembly address, I indicated the main essentials of land records maintenance and the extent to which failure to observe those essentials had contributed to the disorganisation of land records and to the indiscriminate occupation of lands at the disposal of the Government as well as those reserved for communal purposes. The refixing of theodolite stations, a necessary preliminary to land records maintenance, was started and Assistant Tahsildars were employed, *inter alia*, to survey *porambokes* and list encroachments thereon. Up to the close of 1099, the refixing of theodolite stations prior to the commencement of regular maintenance work was completed in 367 out of the 400 *pakuthies* in which that work had to be done, and out of a total of 2,42,607 *porambóke* survey numbers covering an area of 3,23,083 acres, the demarcation, survey and preparation of plotted measurement sketches were completed in respect of 92,727 survey numbers covering an area of 97,202 acres. Nearly 40 per cent. of the field work connected with the survey of *porambokes* is thus over, while the balance remaining to be done is about 60 per cent. 62,898 encroachments, covering an area of 5,472 acres, have been detected by the land records staff in the course of their survey of *porambokes*, of which 49,334 cases have been disposed of by the Tahsildars either by registry or by eviction, according as the occupation was unobjectionable or objectionable. While thus a substantial amount of work has been done in this direction, there is no disguising the fact that there is still a very large quantity of work remaining to be done, for bringing to completion the work of surveying *porambokes* and settling the mutual claims of the Sirkar and the land-holder in the matter of their occupation. Such a settlement, it is needless to point out, is imperative in the interests alike of the land-holders and the wider public; and it is idle to expect the Tahsildar with his multifarious and ever-increasing duties to be able to devote that special attention which the clearing of these arrears within a reasonable time involves. Even after the completion of this particular item of work, it will be found that there are many other important items of land records work, such as the writing up of land registers, the maintenance of survey marks on Government lands as well as private holdings, the sub-division of lands for *puduval* and transfer purposes and the preparation of correct plotted sketches, which the Tahsildar cannot be expected to have the time to properly attend to, and which will engage the full time of a body of superior executive assistants like the Assistant Tahsildars, if the revenue work of the taluks is to be kept abreast of advancing times. It is therefore difficult to foresee the day when the Assistant Tahsildars will become a superfluity, although it might be possible to dispense with the bulk of the staff of the temporary accountants and peons now given to them. The work of these officers has shown perceptible improvement in recent years and it cannot now be said that their outturn is below the mark. They have further been steadily contributing revenue which far exceeds the cost of the upkeep of themselves and their staff, and which, though due legitimately to the Government, was not coming in, in past years. We no doubt hear complaints now and then of the hardship caused in individual cases. Such complaints were largely due in the past to the nature of the rules that had been passed under the Land Conservancy Regulation, IV of 1091. The main defects in these rules were, however, removed in 1098 and their rigour relaxed; and the result has been a considerable amount of relief to the public. This will be clear from the fact that, although the number of cases disposed of under the Land Conservancy Regulation increased from 7,240 in 1097 to 22,333 in 1099, the amount of assessment realised, both ordinary and prohibitory, rose from Rs. 18,355 to Rs. 21,479 only. In other words, while the amount

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levied under this head in 1099 was practically the same as that levied in 1097, the number of cases disposed of was nearly treble. Another rule, *viz.*, Rule 35 of the Land Records Maintenance Rules, which has created a certain amount of misunderstanding and is possibly causing some hardship, is being re-examined with a view to its being made innocuous.

10. A large and substantial amount of work has been done by the land records staff, especially in taluks like Nedumangad, by way of regularising the past indiscriminate occupation of lands at the disposal of the Government. As, however, this work gets merged in that of general *puduval* registry, it is difficult to gauge accurately its volume and value.

11. Transfer of Registry. In paragraph 12 of my address last year, I explained the simplified procedure adopted for the disposal of pending *pokkuvaravu* cases, with a view to have all arrears under that head wiped off in advance of the preparation of correct electoral rolls in connection with the general elections to the Legislative Council during the current year. Under this procedure, the sub-division survey preliminary to the disposal of *pokkuvaravu* cases was dispensed with and the issue of *patta* made optional on the application of the parties concerned. As a result of this arrangement and of the special exertions of the special officer charged with the supervision of this work, 1,06,798 cases were disposed of in 1099, against 48,362 cases in 1098, and it is gratifying to note that the 34,768 cases pending at the end of that year were also disposed of before the close of Tulam, 1100, the work being thus brought up-to-date.

12. Administration of Land Revenue. In 1099, the annual *jamabandi* was conducted in all the taluks except Karunagapalli, where it had to be postponed to Chingam, 1100, owing to the floods in Karkatakam last. The object of *jamabandi* is, as I said in my address last year, to afford regular facilities to the superior land revenue officers to conduct a uniform examination of land revenue registers and accounts, thereby securing greater efficiency in land revenue administration, and to fix more accurately the land revenue demand for the year, thus minimising leakage of public revenue. The reports on the annual *jamabandi* conducted for the first time in 1098 were scrutinised by the Government and reviewed in their Order Dis. No. 1130 of 24/Revenue, dated the 29th July, 1924. These reports have brought to light several defects and irregularities in the maintenance of taluk and village accounts and registers, and it now remains for the Land Revenue Commissioner and the *jamabandi* officers to see to their prompt and effective removal. The *jamabandi* officers have also made some useful suggestions calculated to improve land revenue administration and these have been referred to the Land Revenue Commissioner for opinion. It is under contemplation to issue a set of rules defining the duties and responsibilities of *pakuthi* subordinates, and the draft rules are now under the consideration of the Government. The practice of village officers making a house to house collection of *kist*, which entailed considerable waste of their time and prevented their services being turned to better account in other directions, was stopped in 1099. Though this resulted immediately in a large increase in the number of demand notices issued, it is gratifying to note that the amount involved in the auction sale of properties for arrears of *kist* showed a substantial reduction, which is indicative of the fact that coercive steps are in most cases the direct outcome of the negligence of *pattadars* and not their inability to pay up Government dues. The scheme of detailing some of the Division Assistants exclusively for revenue work and others for judicial, referred to in paragraph 13 of my address last year, is not yet ripe for the issue of final orders, but is engaging the earnest attention of the Government.

13. Floods. The south-west monsoon rains of 1099 were extraordinarily heavy, and in Karkatakam, there was considerable devastation in the central and northern parts of the State on account of unprecedentedly heavy floods. All the rivers—especially those of the Quilon, Kottayam and Devicolam Divisions—were in high flood for many days together, dealing death to cattle and destruction to property and crops as they swept down from the mountains to the sea. The sufferings to which the people, and particularly those of the low-lying tracts of Parur, Kunnatnad and

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